

CITY OF SAN JOSÉ, CALIFORNIA
Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
801 North First Street, Room 400
San José, California 95110-1795

Hearing Date/Agenda Number
H.L.C. 12/04/02 Item 6.b.

File Number
HP02-021

Application Type
Historic Preservation Permit

Council District SNI
3 No

Planning Area
Central

Assessor's Parcel Number(s)
264-29-107

STAFF REPORT

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Completed by: David Tymn

Location: South East corner of West San Carlos Street and South Market Street (302 S. Market Street)

Gross Acreage: 0.57 Net Acreage: 0.57 Net Density: n/a

Existing Zoning: CG General Commercial Existing Use: St. Claire Hotel, City Landmark No. HL81-18

Proposed Zoning: No change Proposed Use: No change

GENERAL PLAN

Completed by: DT

Land Use/Transportation Diagram Designation
Core Area Commercial

Project Conformance:
☒ Yes ☐ No
☐ See Analysis and Recommendations

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND ZONING

Completed by: DT

North: Surface parking lot CG General Commercial

East: Commercial (Original Joe's Restaurant) CG General Commercial

South: Commercial (Fox Theatre) CG General Commercial

West: Commercial (Hotel under construction) CG General Commercial

ENVIRONMENTAL STATUS

Completed by: DT

☒ Reuse of the Downtown Environmental Impact Report found complete 4-27-99
☐ Negative Declaration circulated on
☐ Negative Declaration adopted on

☐ Exempt
☐ Environmental Review Incomplete

FILE HISTORY

Completed by: DT

Annexation Title: Original City

Date: 3/27/1850

PLANNING DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTION

☐ Approval
☒ Approval with Conditions
☐ Denial
☐ Uphold Director's Decision

Date _____

Approved by: _____
☐ Action
☒ Recommendation

OWNER / DEVELOPER

R. Scott Lynch, Mobedshahi Hotel group
1740 North First Street
San Jose CA 95112

DESIGNER

Jeff Luney, Genslar
325 South First Street
San Jose CA 95113

PUBLIC AGENCY COMMENTS RECEIVED

Completed by: DT

Department of Public Works

None

Other Departments and Agencies

None

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

None

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

The owner/ applicant, the Mobedshahi Hotel Group, is requesting a Historic Preservation Permit to allow exterior changes in the form of 1) the installation of a skylight structure over the outdoor courtyard and 2) the replacement of the outdoor courtyard flooring in the Hyatt Sainte Claire Hotel, City Landmark No. HL81-18. A Historic Preservation Permit (HP01-007) was approved in 2001 for modifications to the courtyard including enlargement of historic windows and addition of an exit door.

The surrounding land uses are: a surface parking lot across W. San Carlos Street to the north, Original Joe's restaurant to the east, the Fox theatre to the south and hotel construction across Market Street to the east.

This project was presented to the design review subcommittee of the Historic Landmarks Commission on September 18, 2002 and November 20, 2002 to review and discuss conceptual plans. At the November 20, 2002 meeting, the applicant's representatives presented revised plans, materials boards and renderings that addressed concerns raised previously. The efforts and revisions were well received as significant progress was made to have the plans reflect the project. The subcommittee comments from those meetings are attached.

HISTORIC RESOURCE DESCRIPTION

A brief description from the attached National Register of Historic Places Inventory Nomination Form follows. Built in 1926, the Hotel Sainte Claire is a fine example of a monumental eclectic style building. The Hotel is significant in that its history is an integral part of the history of San Jose and remains to this day among the City's most recognized architectural landmarks. It was designed by the prominent San Francisco architectural firm of Weeks and Day, the same firm which designed several of the great hotels in San Francisco, including the Mark Hopkins and St. Francis.

The Hotel was financed by noted realtor and developer T.S. Montgomery, a prominent San Josean, largely responsible for much of the commercial development in downtown San Jose. In addition to financing such an ambitious project, Montgomery donated to the City a parcel of land across from the Hotel for the new civic auditorium, which stands today. Clearly this area of the downtown was to be the target of a major influx of people. As a result, the Sainte Claire enjoyed the status of being the premier grand hotel in the entire San Jose south peninsula region, and the reputation of having among the most elegant accommodations between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Outdoor Courtyard

Originally, the open patio room was framed by a Corinthian arcade. A small formal garden and fountain created a moment of peace and greenery within the building.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Environmental review for this project is covered by the re-use of the Downtown Environmental Impact Report Resolution #68839, adopted by the City Council on March 27, 1999.

GENERAL PLAN CONFORMANCE

This property has a General Plan designation of Core Area Commercial. The proposed project and existing commercial hotel uses are consistent with the General Plan Land Use Transportation Diagram designation of Core Area Commercial.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This project proposes a skylight structure over the existing outdoor courtyard area. This area is used for dining, gathering and for organized group events such as weddings and receptions. The skylight structure is intended to add privacy to the courtyard, provide protection from the weather for year-round use and to screen the view of the adjacent Fox Theatre building walls.

The design is intended to allow removal of the skylight in the future, if necessary, so as to not compromise the historic character of the hotel's exterior walls. The proposed skylight will be supported by independent steel columns, with composite column covers 18" in diameter. The skylight frame will have only flashing and roofing attachments to the existing walls to allow for weather proofing.

As part of the project the installation proposes to relocate historic tile medallions that are mounted on the original west wall of the courtyard. As designed, the horizontal plane of the skylight would partially cover the medallions so the applicant is proposing to relocate them to the east wall of the courtyard.

Also proposed is the replacement of the courtyard flooring. Research done by the applicant's representatives shows that the existing flooring was installed in 1991. Replacement materials and designs were presented to the sub committee on November 20th, but are still being reviewed and considered by the applicant and will be presented to the Historic Landmarks Commission on December 4, for final review and recommendation.

ANALYSIS

The primary project issue is conformance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The project conforms to the Standards in general, and in particular to Standard Nos. 1 and 9.

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

The property will maintain its historic use as a commercial hotel. The courtyard will be covered by two distinct skylight structures: the smaller over the entry area and the larger over the main gathering area. The skylight structures are designed in a manner that is intended to be sensitive to the historic nature of the original hotel and can be removed with minimal damage to the main structure. The support columns for the skylights are designed to conceal the actual structural supports and rainwater downspouts. They will be compatible with the existing materials and will be easily differentiated from the original main structure. Colors and materials should be identified on the plan set and meet the Secretary of the Interior's standards for compatibility. The color of the new elements should differ slightly from the historic hotel in order to stand apart from original materials.

The replacement of the courtyard flooring will remain an item for discussion at the December 4, 2002 Historic Landmarks Commission meeting. Three different materials and designs were presented to the design review sub committee and will be presented to the Commission for comment.

The proposal to relocate the historic tile medallions that are mounted on the original west wall of the courtyard to the non-historic east wall of the courtyard does not conform to Standard No. 9. Staff is recommending the historic tile medallions remain in place, while new columns are pulled away from the wall surface and the proposed skylight soffit is raised slightly to accommodate the medallions.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A public hearing notice for the project was published in a local newspaper and mailed to all property owners and tenants within 500 feet of the subject site.

RECOMMENDATION

Planning staff recommends that the Historic Landmarks Commission find that the proposal conforms to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and recommend approval of the proposed project to the Director of Planning with standard and special conditions as follow:

1. Colors and materials for the skylight presented to the Historic Landmarks Commission shall be included on the approved plan set. The color of the new architectural elements shall be slightly differentiated from that of the existing historic fabric.

2. Materials, design and colors of the proposed new flooring presented to the Historic Landmarks Commission shall be included on the approved plan set.
- 3 . The historic tile medallions that are mounted on the original west wall of the courtyard remain in place, while new columns are pulled away from the wall surface and the proposed skylight soffit is raised slightly to accommodate the medallions .

Attachments

- National Register Form
- Map
- Design Review Subcommittee Comments